

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks.

Claim 1 has been amended. Claims 1-9 remain pending in this application.

As amended, claim 1 sets forth an image reading apparatus that comprises a light source for generating light directed toward a linear image reading region that has a first length, a plurality of light-receiving elements that output image signals corresponding to received light, an array of lenses that focuses light onto the light-receiving elements, and a light-shielding member. The array of lenses has a second length that is greater than the first length. All of the light-receiving elements are arranged in a single line having an extremity. The light-shielding member covers at least one light-receiving element disposed at the extremity outside the first length but inside the second length.

The underlined additional features above are shown, for example, in Fig. 2. Specifically, the image reading region S is shown to extend over a certain length (first length). The lens array 3 is shown to have a length (second length) that is greater than the first length of the image reading region S. The light-shielding member 7 is shown to be located outside the first length of the image reading region S, but inside the second length of the lens array 3. Such a structure is advantageous for causing the shielded light-receiving element or elements to appropriately perform black level adjustment.

U.S. Patent No. 4,293,877 to Tsunekawa et al., discloses only the photo-sensor portion of an image scanning system. Therefore, this reference does not even show a light source, an image

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Inventor: Hiroshi FUKUMOTO et al.

Attorney's Docket No.: KIX0148-US
Page 5

reading region, and a lens array, let alone the positional and dimensional relationship of such components relative to the light-shielding member 6.

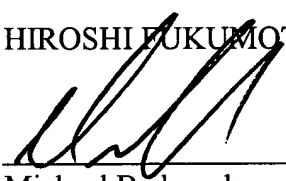
In U.S. Patent No. 4,974,098 to Miyakawa et al., the length of the lens 2 is clearly shown to be smaller than the length of the image reading region (corresponding to the width of the original 1), and each extremity 12 or 13 of the linear sensor 10 is clearly shown to be outside the length of the lens 2. Therefore, this reference teaches the opposite of what is set forth in amended claim 1.

In view of the foregoing all of the claims in this case are believed to be in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any questions or determine that any further action is desirable to place this application in even better condition for issue, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

PILLSBURY WINTHROP
SHAW PITTMAN LLP
1650 Tysons Boulevard
McLean, VA 22102
Tel: 703/770-7900

Respectfully submitted,

HIROSHI FUKUMOTO ET AL.

By: 
Michael Bednarek
Registration No. 32,329

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Customer No. 28970